

ai VA, VB, VIA, VIB, VIIA, VIIB, of VIIIA of the Periodic Table, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof, said acicular body having a polygonal cross section.

4. (Amended) The acicular body according to claim 2 having a cross-sectional dimension less than about 10 μm .

A2 5. (Amended) An acicular body comprising at least one oxide of at least one metal selected from the group consisting of Groups IB, IIA, IIB, IIIA, IIIB, IVA, IVB, VA, VB, VIA, VIB, VIIA, VIIB, of VIIIA of the Periodic Table, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof, said acicular body having a polygonal cross section.

sub 30 Please add the following new claims 30-32.

sub 31 30. (New) The acicular body according to claim 2 having a cross-sectional dimension less than about 5 μm .

A3 31. (New) An acicular body comprising at least one oxygen-containing compound of a metal selected from the group consisting of Groups IB, IIA, IIB, IIIA, IIIB, IVA, IVB, VA, VB, VIA, VIB, VIIA, VIIB, of VIIIA of the Periodic Table, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof, said acicular body having a polygonal cross section and a cross-sectional dimension greater than about 1 μm .

sub 32 32. (New) An acicular body comprising at least one oxide of a metal selected from the group consisting of Groups IB, IIA, IIB, IIIA, IIIB, IVA, IVB, VA, VB, VIA, VIB, VIIA, VIIB, of VIIIA of the Periodic Table, rare earth metals, and mixtures thereof, said acicular body having a polygonal cross section and a cross-sectional dimension greater than about 1 μm .

REMARKS

The Office action dated June 18, 2002 and the cited references have been carefully considered.